

MICHIGAN LEGWORK

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH

JULY/AUGUST 2006

New DLEG Deputy Directors Named



Sharon Bommarito



Rita Canady

CONGRATULATIONS TO Sharon Bommarito and Rita Canady, who were named DLEG deputy directors June 29 in an announcement made by Director Robert W. Swanson. Sharon and Rita will fill the positions formerly held in an acting capacity by Irma Zuckerberg and Jim Smiertka, respectively.

Irma has left DLEG to work for Prima Civitas, and Jim has returned to his duties as senior executive assistant director.

Sharon, who also had been serving as an acting deputy director, joined the department as director of the Unemployment Insurance Agency in September 2003. Her areas of responsibility now include Internal Audit, Technology & Media, Construction Codes, Workforce Programs, MSHDA, Commission on Disability Concerns, Labor Market Information & Strategic Initiatives, Employment Relations, Liquor Control Commission, Broadband Authority, Commission for the Blind, Rehabilitation Services, Media & Public Relations, and Fire Services.

Rita, who had been director of human resources since 2002, now has responsibility for the Tax Tribunal, MIOSHA, Human Resources, Administrative Hearings & Rules, Public Service Commission, Land Bank Fast Track Authority, Financial & Insurance Services, Commercial Services, Finance & Administrative Services, Policy & Legislative Affairs, and Career Education.

Dale Beachnau has been named acting director of Human Resources.

In addition, MIOSHA Director Doug Kalinowski has been asked to serve as acting deputy director responsible for the Unemployment Insurance Agency, Workers' Compensation Magistrates, Michigan Employment Security Board of Review, Workers' Compensation Appellate Commission, Workers' Compensation Agency, and Wage & Hour. Doug originally joined MIOSHA in 1980 and has been director since September 2002.



Doug Kalinowski

Martha Yoder is serving as acting director of MIOSHA.

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A Message from the Director

During July, I traveled the state, including to the cities of Detroit, Grand Rapids, Lansing, and Flint, to announce the Governor's 2006 Cool Cities designees. Michigan State Housing Development Authority Executive Director Michael DeVos joined me for the Lansing announcement.

There are 23 Cool Cities projects this year, and the recipients came from as far away as Iron Mountain to participate in the announcements. In the 33 years I've been in government, I've never been involved with an idea and an initiative that has generated the excitement and collaboration that Cool Cities has at the local, state, national, and international levels.

I want to congratulate the Cool Cities team, including the staff of the Cool Cities Collaborative and MSHDA, who worked so hard on the selection of the projects and organizing the events we've held to celebrate them. It also would not have been possible without the Cool Cities representatives from all of the departments who assisted with the selection process and will offer technical assistance and resources to our Cool Cities designees. Congratulations on the successful kick-off of 2006's program!

Special thanks to Karen Gagnon, Cindy Blanche, Elizabeth Armstrong, Jim Smiertka, Julie Hales Smith, Gary Heidel, James Wilfong, Joe Borgstrom, MSHDA Community Assistance Team and Community Development Specialists, and members of the multi-state agency Cool Cities Coordinating Team.

It was inspiring for me to hear the City of Pontiac representatives tell the crowd they first applied to be a part of Cool Cities in 2004 — they didn't make it that round, or again in 2005, but they kept trying by continuing to incorporate new partners such as Clear Channel Communication, Live Nation, and Arts Beats and Eats Foundation and polishing and refining their proposal. Now in 2006, they are officially a Cool City Neighborhood Award designee, and I can hardly wait to see the new Crofoot Building, which will house performances and music workshops for youths in music, performance, sound, lighting, and staging in the entertainment industry.

They weren't the only ones who found that applying for the third time was the charm — there were others — but, like Pontiac, all of the applicants were so enthusiastic as they stood up to the microphone to share their ideas, which will become a reality as a result of Cool Cities.

We've been tracking results of the Cool Cities initiative since it began in 2004. Results don't happen overnight, but the first-year participants told us this program has had a very positive impact. One hundred percent reported that the Cool City designation caused other community groups to get involved with revitalization. We learned that the designation itself mattered and offered tremendous value in leveraging significant contributions to their communities. In total, over \$350 million was contributed by public (\$63 million), state (\$109 million), and private (\$174 million) organizations.

One great example of this success has been the City of Flint project, which was one of the first to be part of the Cool Cities pilot program when it was launched in 2004. The grant to Uptown Reinvestment Corp. was used to restore the exterior of the First National Bank & Trust Company Building to become First Street Lofts, a 16-unit loft development in downtown Flint. The developers tapped into numerous state resources to make this project a success. Since 2004, the Cool Cities designation has created and is creating new interest in downtown Flint again, including development of once-vacant buildings into exciting new projects.

I encourage you to read about some of 2006's exciting projects in cities such as Ionia, Cadillac, Charlevoix, Detroit, Howell, and Saginaw at <http://michigan.gov/som/0,1607,7-192--147702--,00.html>. And again, thank you to the Cool Cities team for a job well done!

Best wishes for a safe and happy summer,



Robert W. Swanson

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Which Team Will Capture the Spirit of DLEG Trophy?

In this year's Spirit of DLEG competition, the field of nominees has been narrowed to eight following online voting by DLEG employees during the first part of July. The finalists are:

- Bureau of Commercial Services
- Bureau of Workforce Programs – Agriculture Employment Team
- MIOSHA – Move Committee
- Michigan Rehabilitation Services – Northern Michigan District Job Survivor Team
- Michigan Rehabilitation Services – Reorganization Advisory Council
- Michigan Public Service Commission – Accounting and Auditing Section
- Michigan Works! – Veteran Service Team
- Unemployment Insurance Agency

The Office of Media Technology is currently developing a video of these top entries for judging by an impartial outside panel. This year's theme is "inclusion," and the video will convey how each team demonstrated this value in a work project over the past year.

The winning team will be announced at the State of DLEG meeting, to be held Sept. 28 at the Lansing Community College MTEC.



Andy Neumann Heads New Bureau of Fire Services

State Fire Marshal Andy Neumann has been named acting director of the newly created Bureau of Fire Services within DLEG.

The new bureau became a reality June 22 when Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm signed a package of bills that combines into one entity a variety of fire-related services — from the prevention of fires to the protection of persons and property from exposure to the dangers of fire and serving the training needs of the state's more than 31,000 firefighters.

The bureau's responsibilities include a plan review for all state-inspected buildings, such as hospitals and schools; fire safety education; fire codes; arson investigation; firefighter certification; and fire tracking and reporting. The bureau will also help set fire insurance rates and seek Homeland Security funding for state and local departments.

Andy was appointed state fire marshal within the Bureau of Construction Codes and Fire Safety in 2004. His background includes serving as legislative liaison for the Department of Treasury, as a state legislator representing the 106th District, and as a professional firefighter for the city of Alpena and president of the International Association of Firefighters, Local 623, for 10 years.



Andy Neumann with Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm

Team of Four Will Represent DLEG in Labor Day Mackinac Bridge Run



Front row: John Boes, Shelley Mason, and Bob Savage.
Back row: Jim Baird.

DLEG Director Robert W. Swanson is pleased to announce the four-member team that will represent our department in the Labor Day Mackinac Bridge Run.

Two years ago, Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm began a new Labor Day tradition when she launched the first-ever Mackinac Bridge Run to kick off the Mackinac Bridge Walk. Some 300 runners were invited to participate in the 4.5-mile run.

This year, DLEG's Jim Baird, John Boes, Shelley Mason, and Bob Savage — all of whom work at the Michigan Commission for the Blind Training Center in Kalamazoo — have been selected to be among the 300 runners.

Jim, Shelley, and Bob are instructors at the Training Center, and John is a counselor. All four began working at the center within a few months of each other in 1976 and began running as a group soon after. Since then, the team has run together for 29 years during the lunch hour through all seasons of the year, and the group has participated in hundreds of Saturday benefit runs.

In their application letter for the Mackinac Bridge Run, the team stated, "As our years

creep up on us, and looking at retirement in the near future, we would love to run together as a group in this special event. We have 124 years of state employment together, and our ages range from 55 to 64 years old. We all have supported wellness and fitness to our fellow employees and the students we teach."

Jim Baird has run several marathons, including the Detroit Marathon and the Chicago Marathon. He has also participated in many triathlons. Jim feels that exercising is a model for his children and the reason why they are also involved in wellness. His daughter has run with him in the Detroit Marathon, and he has a son who is a physical education teacher.

John Boes, who is blind, is involved with the Michigan Blind Athletic Association. He has been running for the past 30 years. He has run many marathons, including the Boston Marathon. He has also participated in several triathlons. John runs with a guide, and he has designated his 14-year-old son Bryan to run with him. Bryan is on his high school's track and cross country teams.

Shelley Mason is interested in wellness and loves a variety of exercises. She says she feels the benefits of running in her everyday life.

Bob Savage, the oldest on the team at 64, runs local runs and never seems to miss a day. He has two daughters who come in on their days off to run with him. They both say their dad runs them into the ground.

The team will enjoy a pasta dinner the night before the run with fellow runners, experience running the Mighty Mac at sunrise, receive a commemorative T-shirt, and be listed in the official 2006 Event Yearbook.

Blood Donations Sought During Summer 'Slump'



An urgent appeal for blood donations — in Michigan as well as nationwide — was issued in early July by the American Red Cross. Summer is traditionally a "slump season" for blood donations, and this year is no exception.

Especially needed are Type O-positive and -negative blood types. The Upper Peninsula Regional Blood Center reports a critical need

for O-negative and B-negative blood types.

Everyone 17 years of age or older, weighing 110 pounds or more, and in good health can attempt to donate blood.

You can make an appointment to donate blood by clicking on <http://www.michigan.gov/blood-challenge>. Please scroll down to SOM worksite-scheduled blood drives.

People on the Move

Congratulations to **Vicki Rafferty**, the new staff and organizational development manager for Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS). As a founding leader of the MRS School for Leadership in 1997, Vicki has continued to have a leadership role in its growth and development. She has also been involved in numerous training initiatives and currently serves as a DLEG ambassador. Vicki began her career with state government in 1978, joining MRS as a counselor in 1985. She served as a transition counselor in the Battle Creek office until her promotion in 1991 to site manager.

Congratulations to **Cathy Hardaway**, who has been promoted to site manager of the Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) Detroit Porter office. Cathy began her career in state government in 1975, joining MRS as a counselor in 1978. She served as a mental health/youth counselor in the Livonia, Detroit Schools, and Special Projects offices, and has also worked with the workers' compensation, adjudicated youth, and corrections programs. Cathy played a lead role in working with community partners to develop the Psychosocial Program with Southwest Counseling Solutions, a Community Mental Health facility, and a homeless program with Jewish Vocational Service.

She likes helping people, and that's what she will be doing in her new position with the Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA). **Davida Williams** has joined UIA as its human resources (HR) liaison with DLEG. Davida comes from the Department of Human Services (DHS), where she worked for nearly 10 years, most recently as a program specialist handling funding sources to help low- and moderate-risk families of abused children. She has also worked as a personnel management analyst in the DHS human resources area. Prior to joining the state, she worked as an HR manager for Montgomery Ward. Davida holds a bachelor's degree in public administration from Eastern Michigan University and a master's degree in human resources from Central Michigan University.

Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm made two appointments earlier this summer to the Michigan Tax Tribunal. **John S. Gilbreath** of Ann Arbor, a current member of the Michigan Tax Tribunal, has been appointed to represent members at large for a term expiring June 30, 2010. He succeeds **Michael A. Stimpson**, whose term has expired. **Richard A. Southern** of Clarkston, former chief deputy clerk with the Oakland County Clerk/Register of Deeds office, has been appointed to represent real estate appraisers for a term expiring June 30, 2010. He succeeds **Micheal R. Lohmeier**, whose term has expired.

The Office of Financial and Insurance Services (OFIS) has been reorganized to streamline the agency's internal legal resources and maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of its enforcement efforts. The newly formed Office of General Counsel began operations on June 19, with OFIS General Counsel **John Schoonmaker** stepping up to lead the new legal division.

John previously served as chief administrative law judge and director of legal resources.

The Bureau of Commercial Services has welcomed two new employees. **Lisa McCray** is a new word processing assistant in the Cosmetology/Barber/Appraisers Unit, Licensing Division. **Barb Shutler**, who completed law school in January and passed the bar exam on May 5, is a new document examiner in the Document Review Section, Corporation Division.

The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) has welcomed five new staff members. **Karen Gould** is an auditor in the Energy Grants Section. She is an accounting graduate of Davenport College and is planning to pursue a master's degree from Walsh College. Prior to joining MPSC, Karen was an office manager at Cathey Company in Lansing.

Lisa Babcock is the newest member of the Operations & Wholesale Market Division, Engineering Section. As a departmental analyst, Lisa will focus her work on the 21st Century Energy Plan. She previously worked as a law clerk in the Regulatory Affairs Division and as a member of the Senate Democratic staff. Lisa recently received a law degree from the Michigan State University College of Law.

Kevin Liu is a new auditor in the Regulated Energy Division's Accounting and Audit Section. A 2004 accounting graduate of Michigan State University, Kevin was previously employed as an auditor with Maner, Costerian & Ellis in Lansing and also at the State Bar Association. Kevin was born in Beijing, China. Before moving to the U.S., he received a degree in English, Science and Technology from Tianjin University.

Liz Rakowski is also a new auditor in the Regulated Energy Division's Accounting & Audit Section. A graduate of Michigan State University, Liz is taking four classes to fulfill her Certified Public Accountant (CPA) requirements. Liz previously worked at the State Bar Association.

Chuck Putnam, a long-time adjunct accounting instructor at Lansing Community College, is the newest member of the Regulated Energy Division's Rates & Tariff Section. Chuck has a degree in accounting as well as in animal physiology from Michigan State University. Prior to joining MPSC, Chuck worked for 12 years as a controller at Universal Map in Williamston.

The Benton Harbor office of Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) has welcomed **Rodney G. Massey** as a rehabilitation counselor. He comes to MRS with a background in counseling and guidance, job placement and job development. He has worked as a rehabilitation coordinator for MRS and as a benefits planning coordinator for Goodwill Industries of Mid-Michigan. Rodney has a Master of Arts degree in rehabilitation counseling & community inclusion from Wayne State University.



Davida Williams

Debbie Reed Retires from Detroit RICC

By Norm Isotalo

After 32 years with the unemployment insurance program, Deborah Reed retired at the end of June from her post as manager of Team Hummer at the Detroit Remote Initial Claims Center (RICC), Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA).

During her years with the UIA, most of her time was spent working in the branch offices that existed before the agency changed over to telephone and Internet-filed claims systems. She began her career as a typist clerk, then moved on to become a claims worker, a supervisor, and manager.

Her team members honored Debbie on June 27 with a luncheon for just her and her team. An open house for all Detroit RICC staff took place that afternoon.

In retirement, Debbie looks forward to enjoying time with her family and visiting her son, who is pursuing a doctorate in English literature from Cornell University in New York, and she may work part-time for Romulus Community Schools.



Debbie Reed, right, accepts a retirement recognition plaque from Detroit RICC Director Gwen Huskey at a luncheon held in Debbie's honor on June 27.

Danette "Lucy" Buckman Retires after 26 Years of Service

By Norm Isotalo

Although Danette Buckman said she has had a very good job with the state of Michigan for the past 26 years, she has given that up to become a babysitter for her one-year-old granddaughter and to become a traveler. Danette retired in June from her post as a claims examiner with the TRA/Special Programs Unit at the Unemployment Insurance Agency.

Danette, also known as "Lucy" by friends and co-workers, joined the state in 1980 and began working for the Michigan Employment Security Commission (MESC). Over the years, Danette worked as a claims examiner at a number of MESC offices in the metropolitan Detroit area and at the Detroit RICC before joining the TRA Unit about five years ago.

"I've enjoyed all my years with the state and the agency," she said. "I've also enjoyed the close-knit working relationship with my co-workers. They're like family."

In fact, her "family" helped tag her with the name "Lucy" and her co-worker Linda Nevedal as "Ethel" because of the "trouble" the pair would get into from time to time, much like Lucy Ricardo and Ethel Mertz from the old "I Love Lucy" television series.

As Linda explained, Danette would get into "trouble" like Lucy, and Linda would go along with it, like Lucy's good friend Ethel. "We never got into serious trouble, but I'm sure we gave our supervisor some gray hairs."



Just in case anyone didn't know that Danette Buckman was retiring, a "Happy Retirement" headpiece made it clear. Danette was decked out for a reception in her honor, held June 29 at Cadillac Place, Detroit.

Six DLEG Employees Recognized for Services They Provide for Veterans



Jim Garrison and Holly LaBelle (right) were two of six DLEG staff members recognized earlier this summer for their outstanding services to veterans. Jim and Holly posed for this photo with Vicki Enright, Field Services director, Bureau of Workforce Programs, at the Mt. Pleasant conference.

At the American Legion State Convention held in Lansing on June 17, Local Employment Veterans Representative Roger Raleigh of West Branch and Disabled Veterans Outreach Worker Ron Ross of Pontiac received American Legion national awards for outstanding services to Michigan veterans. "They are shining examples of how the American Legion likes our returning veterans treated with regard to employment," said 2005–2006 State Commander John H. Skinner.

At the Russ Jones Veterans Conference, sponsored June 14–16 by DLEG's Bureau of Workforce Programs in Mt. Pleasant, the American Legion recognized Holly LaBelle, a rehabilitation assistant at the Mt. Pleasant office of Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS). Holly has worked on dozens of Mid-Michigan job fairs and selflessly worked on her own time to rewrite the new *Veterans Benefits & Services Guide* that was published by the State Legislature. The new guide was presented during a two-day veterans training session in Lansing last fall.

Business Service Representative James Garrison, Mt. Pleasant MRS office, was recognized by DLEG Field Services at the Russ Jones Veterans Conference for outstanding services to Michigan veterans. A Purple Heart recipient during the Vietnam War, Jim has also coordinated numerous job fairs in Michigan and is well known for his work in the veteran community. Jim is currently commander of the Central Michigan Chapter of Disabled American Veterans.

At the conference in Mt. Pleasant, Brig. Gen. Robert Taylor recognized three other DLEG employees who are Vietnam veterans — Joe Gabelsberger, Ron Ross, and Leonard Meisel. Each received a Russ Jones Coin of Excellence. Joe is a retired Army colonel and is a local veterans employment representative. Ron is a retired Army captain and is a disabled veterans outreach worker. Ron also hosts The Veteran's Hour radio talk show sponsored by DLEG. Leonard, a former Marine sergeant who became commissioned in the Army in 1980, presently serves as inspector general for the 46 Military Police Command under Brig. Gen. Taylor.

OFIS Bids Farewell to Two Examiners

Office of Financial and Insurance Services Commissioner Linda A. Watters (center) poses with Brian Griffen and Carla Thielemann, who are leaving the agency. Brian, an OFIS bank examiner since 2003, will be studying for a Masters of Business Administration degree in Paris, France. He will attend the Hautes Etudes Commerciales, or Graduate Commercial Studies, where he received a Scholarship of Excellence. He plans to pursue a career in international marketing. He has a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in finance and a Bachelor of Arts degree in French from the University of Michigan, and a Masters of Arts degree in Bulgarian history and politics from Sofia University and the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. Carla has been an OFIS employee since 2003. She started in the insurance

product review unit and became a credit union examiner in May 2005. She is leaving to pursue a financial career in San Francisco. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree in finance from Michigan State University.



Her Job's the Bomb!

By Norm Isotalo

While Tenisha Bridgewater likes what she does for a living, she just hopes she never gets a bang out of her job.

Why? Tenisha is a bomb disposal technician for the Detroit Police Department. In fact, she is the first Black woman to become certified and be a member of any bomb disposal unit in the state of Michigan. She is also the daughter of Barbara Glasker, an unemployment insurance examiner (UIE) with the Unemployment Insurance Agency's Combined Wage Claims Unit at Cadillac Place, Detroit.

How does Barbara feel about her daughter's unique job? Like any mother, Barbara hates that her daughter does such a dangerous job. But she knows that her daughter is a smart person and is qualified to do the job, and she does it well.

Tenisha has been a member of the Detroit Police Department for 12 years and was a patrol officer before joining the Firearms Identification/Bomb Disposal Unit. Barbara explained that her daughter has always been a bit of a tomboy and daredevil and was affected by the events of 9-11.

In a recent interview, which appeared in *Jet* magazine, Tenisha said that after 9-11, she "wanted to do more to serve my city and I thought this would be a good place to make a difference by joining the Firearms Identification/Bomb Disposal Unit." According to Barbara, her daughter finds that being a bomb disposal technician is challenging, but it is a job where she knows what she's getting into whenever she is called and is prepared to handle the situation.

"Unlike patrol officers who may never know what to expect when they respond to a call," Barbara said, "Tenisha is prepared. She knows a bomb or suspicious package has been found. She is trained for these situations and wears protective clothing. In fact, she feels that her job is safer than working as a patrol officer."

Barbara said the one thing that her daughter has found surprising about her job is the wide variety of things people can use to make bombs.

We should be thankful that there are people like Tenisha Bridgewater who put themselves in harm's way to serve and protect all of us.



UIE Barbara Glasker holds a page from *Jet* magazine that features her daughter Tenisha Bridgewater, the first Black woman to be a certified bomb disposal technician and member of any Michigan bomb disposal unit.

Captioned Telephone Service Now Available to Michiganians

The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) announced on July 11 that AT & T, the state's approved Telecommunication Relay Provider, is now offering Captioned Telephone (CapTel) service for Michigan residents who are hard of hearing. CapTel service is available to all telephone customers in Michigan.

CapTel makes using the telephone as easy as using a standard telephone. It allows the user to listen to as well as read word-for-word captions of conversations. It is especially useful for individuals who have good speech but who do not hear well over the telephone.

For a limited time, the CapTel telephone needed for this service is available at a reduced price of \$99; it is normally \$495.

Michigan residents interested in the CapTel service or products can call toll free 1-800-233-9130 (voice or TTY) or visit <http://www.weitbrecht.com/statecapitel/MI.phtml>.



Veterans' Job Specialist Encourages Care Providers to Work with Michigan Rehabilitation Services

By Bill Tobias

As a veterans' employment specialist (first a disabled veteran outreach worker and later a local veterans' employment representative), it has always been my duty to establish a help network whenever I come into a new duty station/work site. It is my prime responsibility to assist the veteran in finding decent employment, but then if the veteran is not work ready it becomes my duty to assist him/her in getting the help that is needed so he/she can eventually hold down a job.

Many years ago I learned what an important ally Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) can be to provide much needed services and assistance to those of my people in crisis. I can almost assure anyone that I have referred well over 500 of my veterans over the last 26 years and have never received complaint one.

Last year alone I had three separate surgeries because of cancer (a verrucous carcinoma) that started with the surgical removal of a surface "wart" that was later found to be a slow growing cancerous tumor that eventually resulted in the amputation of my right foot.

I have had two guardian angels watching over me, both co-located with me here at Orchard View Workforce Development Center in Muskegon. I am ever so fortunate to have these angels and the dearest of friends (Natalie Johnson, vocational rehabilitation counselor; and Dwana Thompson, who is a job developer also with MRS). Since the first amputa-

tion, they have taken turns picking me up at home, bringing me into the office, and then my darling wife picks me up at the close of each day. They have shared in my joys due to progress and helped wipe the tears after my right foot was amputated. I am ever so fortunate to have so many wonderful people watching over me! They both recommended that I seek counsel with Todd Miner for my own vocational rehabilitation.

Todd Miner has assisted many disabled veterans, including me. I shared with him that I was getting scared and that I did not know where to go to seek out help if it was needed. We decided that a drivers' assessment/evaluation was needed to maintain employment. He has assured me that MRS would assist me in the purchase and installation of the hand controls necessary to enable me to drive again.

As MRS has provided peace of mind to everyone I have sent to them over the years, I now have first-hand knowledge of this inner peace, hope, and knowledge that I am not alone in continuing to fight this battle. It goes without saying that, as an amputee, I have a totally new perspective on looking at my life in general. Be assured, I also have a totally new feeling of admiration and appreciation of these wonderful people with MRS from the patient/client's point of view.

I would encourage any fellow care providers to establish a working relationship with MRS and highly recommend that they attend an MRS orientation so that the full range of services MRS is equipped to provide is understood and appreciated.



First-time blood donor Machelle Lorf is an account examiner in UIA's Tax Office.

UIA Rolls Up Its Sleeves to Help the Red Cross

By Valerie Congdon

On July 6, the Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) hosted its second and final Cadillac Place blood drive of 2006. The drive came only days after the Red Cross had issued a blood emergency, and agency staff responded in a BIG way! The drive had 39 pre-made appointments and 13 walk-ins, resulting in 41 pints of blood being donated! These 41 pints will help 123 area patients.

Many thanks to those who participated in the blood drive and a special thanks to first-time donor Machelle Lorf of the UIA Tax Office.

Everyone who donated or attempted to donate received a Red Cross baseball cap, a commemorative pin, and a choice of tickets to several area attractions. And, of course, there are always those cookies!

Through their caring commitment, UIA's blood donors have contributed to the health and well being of the community's sick and injured and are helping to save lives.

Professional Activities

Congratulations to **Bob Robertson**, manager of Staff Development, Human Resources, and Program Evaluation, Michigan Commission for the Blind, who has been named to the DLEG Employee Growth and Development Team (EGDT). EGDT, which includes various representatives from DLEG bureaus and agencies as well as Jim Smiertka, Terry Fobbs, and Dr. Mary Miller from the Organizational Development Office, is responsible for employee quality of life issues and facilitating organizational development activities. Among other tasks, the team coordinates the monthly Leadership Council meetings and the bi-annual State of DLEG meetings.

Cindy L. Zastrow, industrial hygienist with the Consultation Education and Training Division, MIOSHA, has been appointed to an exclusive team within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. She will be acting as a forensic toxicologist and death investigation specialist with the DMORT/WMD Team. The DMORT/WMD Team is a specialized unit whose function is the search and recovery as well as decontamination and processing of contaminated (chemical, biological, nuclear, etc.) human remains for the ultimate purpose of returning these remains to family members, when possible, for humanitarian and legal reasons. This new position will require her to attend quarterly training sessions at various facilities throughout the U.S. Cindy is transferring from her current position as a forensic specialist within DMORT Region V to the WMD Team. Her most recent deployment with DMORT was to New Orleans, where she served at the St. Gabriel Base Camp.

Congratulations to **Gloria Keene**, Licensing administrator, Bureau of Commercial Services, who has been appointed representative for Region 4 on the Member Board Executive Committee of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) for 2006–2007. NCARB develops and recommends standards regulating the practice of architecture.

Congratulations to **Terry Fobbs**, policy administrator in DLEG's Executive Office, who has been elected a member of the National Executive Committee of the Reserve Officers Association (ROA). ROA is a congressionally chartered association that advises the Congress and president on issues of national security. Terry also serves on the National Strategic Planning Committee and the Resolutions Committee, which writes proposed legislation for Congress.



Terry Fobbs (right) with Maj. Gen. Robert W. Smith III, past president of the Reserve Officers Association, at ROA's national convention, held in San Antonio in July.



Bob Robertson

Grand Rapids RICC 'Cooks' with Bake Sale

By Marianne Holst

The Social Committee at the Unemployment Insurance Agency's Remote Initial Claims Center (RICC) in Grand Rapids sponsored a bake and book sale in June that raised nearly \$100 for the center's Holiday Extravaganza in December.

The staff was challenged to bring in their best baked goods for judging by a panel that included RICC Managers Kathy DeBruine and Dennis Knapp and Analyst Nakita McEwen.

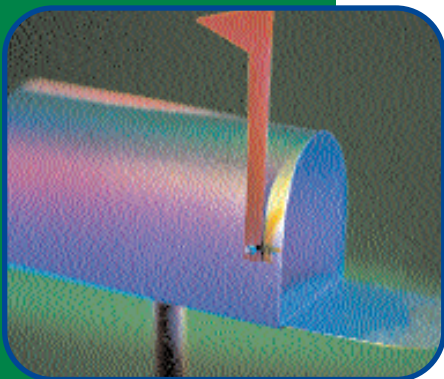
Linda Rozner was declared first-place winner for her delicious raspberry bars. For her efforts, she received a trophy along with coupons for free goodies from the sale.

Other winners were Jerri Teelander (second place); JoAnn Kleck and Debra Riemersma (tied for third place); Dee Tokarski (fourth place); and Lee Ann Campbell (fifth place).



Linda Rozner won first place in the recent Grand Rapids RICC bake sale contest for her tasty raspberry bars.

We Get Letters ... and E-mails!



Ruthanne Okun, director, Michigan Bureau of Employment Relations, received this letter from Thomas L. Boyer with the Kemp Klein Law Firm in Troy: "As you may recall, I represent the City of Rochester Hills. Last night at 10:30, we achieved a complete tentative agreement with AFSCME concerning the City's largest employee group. Bargaining has been ongoing for more than 17 months and during 2006 became almost entirely bogged down over the issues of medical insurance and pension. Although I have had many mediations with **Richard Ziegler**, I wanted to let you know that I think he did an extraordinary job yesterday. He arrived at 10:00 a.m. and basically advised both sides that he was not leaving until there was a contract. Both sides compromised on fairly significant positions, which I suppose is the hallmark of good bargaining and a fair contract. I am convinced that there would not have been a contract yesterday without Richard's able assistance."

Jim Shewmaker with the Tower Mortgage Corp. in Columbus, Ohio, sent this note to Director **Robert Swanson**: "On behalf of our company, I would like to thank and express our appreciation for the efforts of Ms. **Sue McGhee** in OFIS [Office of Financial and Insurance Services] Licensing. She was quick to advise us we had double paid an invoice and was very helpful in providing information necessary for us to reconcile our error. Please give her a big 'Thank You, Sue!'"

A participant in the Youth Leadership Forum sent this note to the **Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns**, which sponsors the event each year: "I want to thank you for giving me a chance to learn so much. That week spent at the Forum was the best week of my life, and I really appreciate your helping to provide that opportunity. Once again, thank you from the bottom of my heart." Also, the mother of a participant in the Youth Leadership Forum sent this e-mail message: "_____ had a really great time at the conference. He said he learned a lot, and it was waaay, waaay, waaay more fun than band camp — although he enjoys that, too, most of the time. Visiting the Capitol was the highlight for him. Thanks for putting on such a great camp."

Dawn Gage, Corporation Division, Bureau of Commercial Services, received a letter of praise from a

customer who wrote, "I wanted to thank you again for the extra effort you put forth enabling me to create two LLCs for a client. You worked with us to help us understand how the system works so we could accomplish our client's goals with an understanding of how to do it right the next time. Thank you so much for working through this with us this time. I can't tell you how much I appreciate it."

Cletonya LeGrand, Corporation Division, Commercial Services, received this letter: "Thank you for your time and efforts, Cletonya. Nice people are few and far between and help is even harder to find. I am full of gratitude and appreciation for your diligent work on my behalf. I look forward to returning the favor one day."

Dianne Bailey, Testing and Education Section, Commercial Services, was the recipient of a bouquet of flowers from a sponsor at the Appraisal Institute/Great Lakes Chapter, who included this note, "Thank you for all you do for us and your extra effort!"

Dianne also received this comment from the professional development coordinator, Michigan Real Estate Agency, with regard to a real estate workshop

Dianne had coordinated: "I thought this was very useful, and I hope that the Department continues to have these meetings yearly. Thanks for inviting us."

Rita Burnett, Licensing Division, Commercial Services, has received a number of compliments for her work: (1) "Rita, thank you for your prompt response to my request and your excellent directions regarding the quicker way to receive the Certification of Licensure. I appreciate the high level of service you have rendered." (2)

"Thank you for taking

good care of my needs and being so prompt. I have been given the position and I will start on Monday thanks to you." (3) "Thank you for all of your help. When I read your note I was jumping for joy. I had a wonderful and blessed successful career in real estate in Michigan. And again thanks for being a part of my new adventure here in Georgia." (4) "Thank you very much. I need this for next week and figured I had requested the information too late. In the future if I ever hear anyone complaining about the state not being helpful, I will quickly correct them." (5) "Thank you very much for your timely response. Your attention and performance regarding this request has been excellent and is greatly appreciated. Have a wonderful day."



Dianne Bailey with bouquet she received

[More] Letters ... and E-mails!

Director **Robert Swanson** received this upbeat e-mail message: "I attended my brother's graduation ceremony this weekend at the **Michigan Career & Technical Institute** in Plainwell. I wanted to express my gratitude and appreciation for the state's support of this program. I can't fully express how significant the time he spent at MCTI was. He has grown significantly as both a person and in his chosen field. Thank you for your continued support of MCTI."

Pamela Collins, site manager of the Detroit Schools office, Michigan Rehabilitation Services, received this voice mail message: "I am not calling about a problem. I would just like to commend you on your excellent staff, **Sabrena Jacobs**, **Nekeysia Cooper-Wright**, and **Ted (Tarek Sawalha)**. I would like to thank those individuals very much. They have been very helpful, and went the whole nine yards to get me back into employment." [Sabrena Jacobs is a vocational rehabilitation counselor; Nekeysia Cooper-Wright is a job placement specialist; and Ted Sawalha is a benefits planner.]

A client of Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) sent this letter complimenting Counselor George Burnett, Waterford office: "I would like to commend **George Burnett** on his services as a counselor and what a wonderful job he does! Let me say he goes above and beyond and should be commended. He is always available. I don't have to wait for days for him to communicate with me. And as an example of his extraordinary service, I had a complaint with an agency that MRS deals with. George set up a meeting with the agency to rectify the situation. ... This is only the tip of the iceberg of the kind of person George Burnett is and the quality of services he provides. I just wanted to share my appreciation with you and to let you know how excellent Mr. Burnett is."

A visitor to the Unemployment Insurance Agency's (UIA) Lansing Problem Resolution Office (PRO) thinks **Dudley Williams** deserves recognition for his work. "I would just like to say thank you to ... Dudley Williams. He took the time to explain what was going on and why this problem occurred. He was the first person who took the time to listen to the problem, and he effectively answered my questions and sent out the appropriate forms in a timely manner! He deserves to be recognized for his excellent customer service."

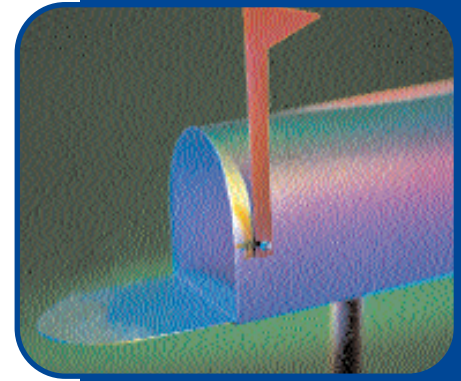
Recently, **Lois Bunting** and **Dawn Johnson** from UIA's Saginaw PRO made a joint presentation before Thumb Region School Business Officials. They received the following note of

thanks from the group's president: "I would like to thank you for your excellent presentation on unemployment compensation. This was a very timely presentation for us as all our districts are cutting back on staff. Many members of our group were new in their positions and will find the information presented to be very helpful to them."

Workers' Compensation Agency Director **Jack Nolish** and Workers' Compensation Appellate Commission Chair **Martha Glaser** recently played host to a professor from the China University of Political Science and Law in Beijing. The professor was visiting the country as part of the U.S. Department of State's International Visitor Program. The State Department's Marjorie Porter wrote, thanking the two for their help. "Many thanks to you for taking the time to meet with Dr. Zheng. You extended such a hearty welcome, introduced him to many of the 'players' and explained the system's complexities beautifully. Now that I know what superb resources we have here in Labor, I hope to bring more visitors in that field."

Barry Simmonds with MIOSHA's Consultation Education and Training Division received this letter of thanks from Robert Preston, Potlatch Forest Products Corp./Gwinn Lumber: "I would like to thank you again for the excellent job you did in providing forklift training to Steve Turri, Jeff Hurst, and me today. The information was very helpful, understandable, and, most of all, practical. It will definitely help us better train our operators and ensure a safer facility for all involved. Looking forward to your August visit, and the help/guidance as we proceed towards our goals of being the industry leader in safety, and VPP status. Thanks again."

James Jensen, an attorney with a Columbus, Ohio, firm, sent this letter to **Kenneth Parker**, Occupational Research Section, Bureau of Workforce Programs: "I would like to bring to your attention the excellent assistance provided to our office by Ms. **Felicia Quinn** [Labor Exchange Service Division analyst]. I have worked with her for over the past eight months on complex prevailing wage issues and her efforts have been exemplary. Ms. Quinn has always been helpful, patient, and professional. She also has promptly replied to my messages or emails and, despite the grief I've no doubt caused her, is always pleasant and understanding. I've worked with many different state employment agencies throughout the U.S., but I've seldom encountered a person as helpful as Ms. Quinn. She is a credit to DLEG and you are fortunate to have her as a member of your team."



Connie Zanger Single-Handedly Organizes MCB's Entry in Annual Chili Cook-Off



Connie Zanger (center) is congratulated by Sherri Heibeck, who nominated her for a Special Delivery, and Fred Wurtzel, who served as MCB's Business Enterprise Program manager until he retired in June.

Congratulations to Connie Zanger, administrative assistant to the Business Enterprise Program (BEP), Michigan Commission for the Blind (MCB), who has received a Special Delivery from the Director.

Connie was nominated by Sherri Heibeck, MCB Administrative Services manager, who wrote: "This is the second year that MCB has entered the Board of Water and Light Chili Cook-Off and won a trophy in the 'meatless chili' category. This is also the second year that Connie Zanger has single-handedly organized the entire event. Along with doing an excellent job as an assistant to the administrator of the BEP program (award winning by itself), she successfully coordinated all of the duties and resources needed to allow MCB to compete in the Chili Cook-Off. Her behind-the-scenes efforts included getting volunteer workers, donations, supplies, and kitchen space; preparing the chili; assuring that the chili was moved from the kitchen to the cook-off site; cleanup; worrying and lamenting; and many other tasks that went unknown to all that assisted her. The Chili Cook-Off has proved to be an excellent outreach for MCB. It provides not only a chance to showcase our skills, but it also allows us to inform the general public of who we are and what we do. It has also proved to be an excellent team-bonding event for MCB. Again, we owe a big thanks to Connie Zanger for the great job."

Norene Lind's Efforts Make Critical Difference



Norene Lind (right) is congratulated on her Special Delivery by Peter Plummer, executive director of SOAHR, and Marsha Parrott-Boyle, MIOSHA Standards Program manager.

Congratulations to Norene Lind, administrative rules manager, State Office of Administrative Hearings and Rules (SOAHR), who has received a Special Delivery from the Director.

Norene was nominated by Marsha Parrott-Boyle, MIOSHA Standards Program manager, who wrote: "Norene put forth significant extra effort to have the MIOSHA Hexavalent Chromium draft standard published in the June 15, 2006, edition of the *Michigan Register*. Her initiative made a critical difference with MIOSHA meeting our legal obligation with Federal OSHA to adopt protective standards issued by Federal OSHA within six months. With her help we have a chance at meeting this obligation. This type of intra-departmental assistance makes for great teamwork. Thanks a million, Norene!"

Dave Parker of MRS ‘Saves the Day’ by Providing Interpreter at Job Fair

Congratulations to Dave Parker, manager of the Grand Rapids District of Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS), who has received a Special Delivery from the Director.

Dave was nominated by William Milzarski, a rights representative with the Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns (MCDC), who wrote: “On March 30, I attended the Grand Rapids Veterans Job Fair hosted by DLEG and Project MOVE. During this event, five individuals who were deaf or hard of hearing came to talk to the vendors about employment. Unknown to them, their sign language interpreter, secured by Goodwill, had a family emergency and text-messaged them 45 minutes into the event saying that he would not attend (no replacement was sent). Knowing that MCDC could not fund an interpreter, I asked if one of the individuals was an MRS consumer. At least one was. I contacted Dave Parker, district manager of the Grand Rapids MRS office, to inform him of the situation. Without hesitation, he verified the consumer in the database and contacted a local sign language interpreting service in the Grand Rapids area. Even though sign language interpreting services are notorious for requiring reservations weeks if not months ahead of an event, Dave’s persistence and persuasion convinced the agency to send an interpreter ASAP. Of the deaf and hard of hearing people who needed the services of an interpreter, all of them received assistance and were able to utilize the job fair to further their employment seeking. The Grand Rapids MRS office also paid for this service. When I thanked Dave on behalf of the consumers, he said, ‘This is what we are here for’ — assisting those people who need our services. Once again, thank you on behalf of these five individuals.”



Dave Parker (left) is congratulated on his Special Delivery by (l. to r.) Todd Sprunger, a counselor at the Grand Rapids MRS office; Ann Bernhardt, lead secretary at that office; and Fred Lovejoy, site manager.

“Special Delivery from the Director”

I would like to nominate the following staff member to receive a
“Great Job” acknowledgement from the Director:

Name of Nominee:	Submitted By:
Office/Bureau of Nominee	Job Title of Nominee
Telephone # of Nominator	Office Location of Nominee

The reason I am nominating this person:

Office/Bureau Director:	Date:

**Bureau Directors: Forward to Linda Cook—DLEG Media Office, 4th Floor, Ottawa Building, Lansing
E-mail: CookL1@Michigan.gov --OR-- FAX: 517-241-1580; Phone: 517-241-0199**

New Initiative Will Help Severely Injured Veterans

By Gary Perkins



Michigan is once again leading the way when it comes to new services and initiatives for assisting veterans. The Veterans Services Unit, Bureau of Workforce Programs, has formed a committee to provide intensive, one-on-one assistance to severely injured Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans who reside in Michigan.

Currently, there are approximately 70 severely injured veterans in Michigan, and that number is expected to grow. Kim Fulton, state director, U.S. Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service, said, "I am not aware of any other state in the country that has formed a separate task force, utilizing disabled veterans outreach workers and local veterans employment representatives to address these unique needs."

The Bureau of Workforce Programs has divided the state into 12 regions, and a veterans representative has been assigned to each region. When notified that a severely injured veteran has

arrived in their region, veterans representatives will arrange an in-home visit to assess needs and help in any way possible.

Veterans representatives have a network of partner agencies they work with every day. These include service organizations, Veterans Affairs, County Veteran Service Officers, Michigan Works! staff, and Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS), to name just a few. During the in-home visit, DVOW/LVER staff will answer questions, provide information, make referrals to partner agencies, and determine if the veteran wants employment services.

Many of our partner agencies will want to be involved with these visits and will offer their services as well. The bottom line is our DVOW/LVERs want to make sure veterans understand everything that is available to them, regardless of where the service is coming from, and make sure veterans' needs are being met. These young men and women volunteered to defend their country and have paid a very high price for their courage and patriotism. It is our honor and privilege to assist them in any way we can to help them meet all of their needs.

Gary Perkins is a retired Army officer, a Vietnam veteran, and has been a disabled veterans outreach worker (DVOW) in Traverse City since 2001. He can be reached at perkinsg@michigan.gov.

MRS-Northern Is Part of Team that Aims to Break Job-Loss Cycle



Congratulations to Elaine Carter, manager of the Northern Michigan District, Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS), and Darcy Juntunen, a counselor at the MRS Traverse City office, who represent MRS in a public-private partnership initiative that has captured two grants this summer from United Way of Northwest Michigan.

Called TeamWork NorthWest (TWNW), the program aims to help reduce poverty by breaking the cycle of job loss that is common among people who are living in poverty or in low-income families.

"TWNW places a retention specialist on site at participating companies on a regularly scheduled basis," Elaine said. "Referrals are made of at-risk employees, forming a three-way partnership among the supervisor, the employee, and the retention specialist. The purpose is to eliminate and prevent barriers that can impede job retention."

Elaine continued, "This is an excellent model of how employers can benefit from all of our services. To date, we have six employers who are involved with our retention specialists. Our year two goals are to add at least six new employers in Kalkaska, add at least 30 new employees from those companies, and add a specially trained retention specialist for employees with psychosocial disabilities."

TWNW has been operational for one year as a pilot program of the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments in collaboration with Northwest Michigan Works! and the Department of Human Services.

Fellowships Are Being Offered for MSU Political Leadership Program

Candidates are being sought for 24 fully paid leadership training fellowships being offered through the Michigan Political Leadership Program (MPLP) at Michigan State University. Applications are encouraged from any Michigan resident who has demonstrated a commitment to effective, responsible public policy and is planning to further that commitment.

MPLP is one of only a handful of multi-partisan leadership training programs in the nation. Its goal is to provide community activists with the knowledge and tools needed to be effective in the political and policy-making arenas.

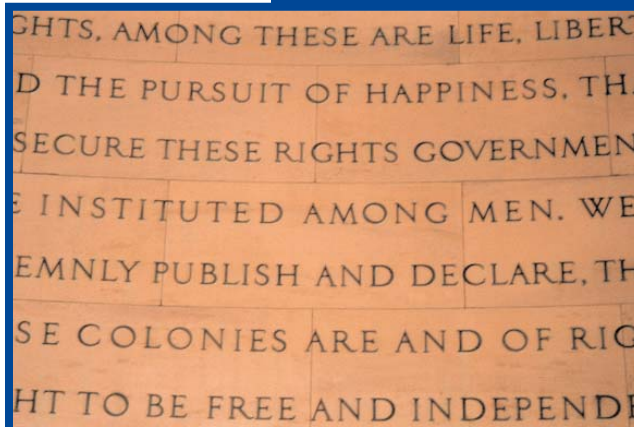
Over 10 weekends from February to November, a diverse group of individuals from across the state participate in a hands-on curriculum that incorporates practical politics, public policy analysis and process, personal leadership development, and effective governance.

Each fellowship is valued at \$12,000 per student and covers meals, lodging, and program materials. Fellows are responsible for their own transportation.

MPLP is administered and supported by MSU's Institute for Public Policy and Social Research within the College of Social Science. Additional funding is provided by numerous public and private-sector organizations as well as donations from individuals and MPLP alumni.

The deadline for submitting applications for the 2007 class is Friday, September 8, 2006. Select applicants will be interviewed based on their written application and letters of recommendation. Fellowship recipients will be announced in mid-November.

Additional information and the application are available online at <http://www.ippsr.msu.edu/MPLP/Recruitment.htm>. The MPLP office may also be contacted at (517) 353-0891.



Saginaw RICC Posts Its Kudos

By Crystal Galloway

Jeanette Brown knew a good idea when she saw one. An unemployment insurance examiner (UIE), Jeanette recently learned that the Unemployment Insurance Agency's Remote Initial Claims Center (RICC) in Detroit had a Kudos Board — a bulletin board containing complimentary messages about staff from customers and others.

She presented the Kudos Board idea to Saginaw RICC Director Donna Vogel because it was very successful at the Detroit RICC in helping to motivate staff. Jeanette felt the Saginaw RICC should have one, too, to bring something positive to the center and to inspire staff. Donna agreed.

In Saginaw, individuals are nominated to appear on the Kudos Board by staff, and the winners are selected by a kudos committee. The board cites a positive quote, along with the winners' pictures and descriptions of what they did to deserve kudos. The winners also receive a Kudos candy bar and a card.

The following Saginaw staff earned Kudos Awards in June: UIE Ganga Shrestha and

Executive Secretary Terri Pagano were nominated for donating blood in June; UIEs Nova Govan, Belinda Bell, Dan McLain, and Jan Chick were nominated because claimants complimented them on their customer service; and UIE Billie Gudritz was nominated for doing an outstanding job in taking a complicated claim from a caller, sorting out the issues, and entering the claim, which allowed another staff member to easily handle the issues and complete the claim.

UIE Karen Ferguson received several nominations for her work with a multi-claimant project for a major employer. She also received a letter of appreciation from Gov. Jennifer Granholm for a job well done on the project.



Some of the Saginaw RICC staff who appeared on the June Kudos Board were, l. to r.: Ganga Shrestha, Terri Pagano, and Nova Govan.



Also appearing on the June Kudos Board were, l. to r.: Karen Ferguson, Dan McLain, Belinda Bell, and Billie Gudritz.



Jeanette Tuttle, Corporation Division, Bureau of Commercial Services, takes a break from the game in the Oldsmobile Park concourse.



Belinda Wright (left), who works for the Homeowners Construction Lien Recovery Fund, Bureau of Commercial Services, enjoys the game with her husband, Ken, and daughter, Carlin.

DLEG Group Sees Lansing Lugnuts Win in Exciting Ninth Inning

DLEG's annual Lansing Lugnuts outing — held this year on Friday, July 28 — brought out 93 DLEG employees and their families to Oldsmobile Park, where the group was seated along the third base side in reserved box seats. The Lugnuts rallied for two runs in the bottom of the ninth inning to beat out the Burlington (Iowa) Bees, 4–3. Following the game, the crowd was treated to fireworks sponsored by LAFCU.



Taylor Barratt (left), granddaughter of Linda Cook, Media & Public Relations, and her friend Michelle Bolley (second from left) do the "chicken dance" with Lugnuts staff in a routine to get the crowd "fired up."

Public Service Commission Holds 'Bring Kids to Work Day' in June

By Judy Palnau

The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) held its "Bring a Child to Work Day" on June 28 to allow more kids to participate, and staff made sure they got a real taste of what takes place at MPSC.

Attending an actual complaint hearing; touring a semi truck's sleeper cab; learning about Michigan's geology, electricity safety, and energy in general; conducting electricity experiments; and examining a solar-powered mini-car were some of the activities. Additional fun activities included games to learn about MPSC, as well as lunch at Aldaco's. The day ended with ice cream for all of the kids.

MPSC staff members who helped put the day together were: Patti Young, who helped plan the event, provided snacks, arranged for a semi truck to be in the MPSC parking lot, and coordinated lunch; Julie Baldwin, who assisted with event planning; Administrative Law Judge Dan Nickerson, who arranged for the kids to attend an actual hearing; Lisa Pappas, who produced a skit explaining administrative hearings; Pete Derkos, who handled the electricity experiments and provided electricity safety information; Mark Nida, who did a presentation on Michigan geology and experiments; and Mark Smith, along with Maggie VanHaften, who coordinated the "energy carnival." Many other MPSC employees assisted with other tasks. A special thanks goes to Urban Options for providing their solar-powered kiddie car.